

**Standardized Testing and Reporting (STAR) Program
Assessment Notes
March 13, 2002**

**Grade 4 and 7 California English Language Arts Standards Test
Writing Component**

The following information is in response to telephone questions that have been received about the Grade 4 and 7 writing component of the California English Language Arts Standards Test.

Who is required to take the writing test?

All students taking the grade 4 and 7 multiple-choice tests including:

- All students enrolled in grade 4
- All students in grades 5 and 6 being tested out of level with the grade-4 multiple-choice tests
- All students in grade 7 who are taking the grade-7 multiple-choice tests
- All students in grades 8 and 9 being tested out of level with the grade-7 multiple-choice tests

For which students are schools required to submit a writing prompt and response booklet for scoring?

- Students given the test, including students who write no response for the prompt—student was given the test, but the student’s test booklet is blank
- Students who are absent on both the test day and the make-up day
- Students whose parents/guardians requested that the student not be tested with the writing test

Why is there no place on the demographic page to indicate that a student will be taking the CAPA?

All information for students taking the CAPA will be taken from the student’s multiple-choice test booklet (Book 1 for grades 2 and 3) or the answer document (grades 4 through 11). Students are given the CAPA because they are unable to take the tests in the STAR Program even with accommodations or modifications. Therefore, students taking the CAPA will be unable to access the writing test component.

What should schools do with Writing Test and Response Booklets that were pre-coded for students taking the CAPA?

Mark the booklets “Void, Student taking CAPA” and return to the STAR Processing Center with the school’s non-scorable materials.

When are test sites to return the scorable and non-scorable writing test materials to district STAR coordinators?

The March materials are to be returned on March 19 and the May materials on May 14.

What does “untimed” mean for the writing test?

“Untimed” means that students are to have as much time as they need to complete a first draft story or essay in a single sitting. Most students will complete the task within the estimated time provided in the Item and Time Chart.

What types of materials must be covered or removed from rooms where the writing tests are administered?

Any charts or other materials that would help students write their responses are to be covered or removed, this includes materials that may be on student desks. These materials include, but are not limited to, scoring guides; grammar, punctuation, and capitalization rules; writing process guides; and hints for organizing writing.

What may teachers read to students?

The “Directions for Administration” have explicit directions about this. The teachers are to read only the directions on the front of the booklet aloud while students follow along. The students are required to read all other information in the test booklet, including the writing prompt/task, independently.

May students write rough drafts, revise them, and then write final stories or essays in the test booklets?

No, like previous years, students are to write their first drafts on the lined pages of the test booklets. They are to use the unlined scratch paper only for planning their responses.

May students use additional paper to complete their stories or essays, if they do not have enough space in the booklet?

No, only what is written on the lined pages in the test booklet will be scored. Any additional paper will be removed and discarded before the tests are scored.

If students with IEPs or 504 Plans type their responses, are these to be transcribed into the test booklet?

No, if the accommodation or modification for a computer-generated response is correctly gridded, the typed response will be scored. Insert the typed response into the student’s test booklet and submit for scoring.

If students write their responses in a language other than English, may teachers translate the responses and write them in the test booklets for the students?

No, each student must write his/her response in the test booklet. If the student uses enough English for the reader to score the paper, the paper will be scored. If there is an insufficient amount of English to be scored, the student’s work will be coded as an “L”—student wrote in a language other than English.

Is used scratch paper to be returned with the non-scorable materials?

No, STAR test site coordinators are to collect and destroy the scratch paper.

What score will students receive on the California English Language Arts Standards Test, if they do not receive a writing test score?

Students with no writing test scores will receive an overall ELA CST scaled score and performance level based on their responses to the multiple-choice components of the test. Two separate scales will be used to determine the students’ scaled scores and performance levels: one for the multiple-choice test only and one for the combined multiple-choice/writing test.